



The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization
600 3rd Avenue, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10004

**Statement by Ambassador Katsunari Suzuki
at the KEDO General Conference in New York
May 23, 2002**

Thank you very much.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is a great privilege to be here today for this annual conference. First, I would like to express my heartfelt respect and gratitude to Ambassador Chan Sun Sup, Chairman of the Executive Board, Ambassador Kartman, Executive Director of KEDO, and all other people, who have been so dedicated in their support for this KEDO Project.

1. I was designated as the representative of Japan to the Executive Board of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization on May 10. I look forward to fulfilling my duty with this KEDO project in cooperation with the Secretariat and all other members of the Executive Board.
2. Last September, the people of Japan and the entire world were struck with deep grief, horror, and great anger upon the terrorist attacks in the United States. We shared the same grief and fear with all the New Yorkers and Americans. I would like to extend my deepest sympathies and condolences for this fatal tragedy suffered by New York and the entire United States on September 11. I commend KEDO on continuing its operation and duties during the most difficult times. A task made possible, no doubt, by the generous support of New Yorkers. I would also like to extend my respect to Ambassador Kartman and the excellent staff of the KEDO Secretariat, who have been steadfast in execution of their jobs.
3. As to the DPRK and its external relations, we have seen some positive developments recently in their attitudes vis-à-vis Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the United States. The visit to Pyongyang this April by Mr. Lim Dong Won, the ROK's Special Envoy, produced an agreement on the resumption of South-North talks. Japan-North Korea Red Cross talks took place in Beijing from April 29 to 30. The United States is also prepared to conduct talks with the DPRK, as they have expressed their willingness to receive Ambassador Pritchard. These are certainly welcome signs of the DPRK's positive attitudes toward dialogue.

4. Japan will continue to make steady efforts on the Japan-North Korea normalization talks in close coordination with the US and the ROK. Our hope is that these efforts will redress our irregular postwar relations with North Korea, in such a way that they will contribute to the peace and stability of Northeast Asia. Through these efforts, we would like to solve humanitarian and security issues, including the issue of abducted Japanese citizens.

5. We have seen steady progress of the KEDO Light Water Reactor Project, since 1995. At the LWR project site in Kumho, excavation work for the power block's foundation began in early September last year. Furthermore, "pouring of the first concrete" is scheduled to take place this coming August at the site. Though the signing of the Quality Assurance and Warranties Protocol with the DPRK last year, as well as the ongoing negotiation on the Nuclear Liability Protocol, we are expected to share with the DPRK a greater understanding of the safety of operating nuclear power plants and on the issues and systems associated with unexpected accidents. The significance of these developments extends much beyond providing power plants to the DPRK. Japan is among the leading proponents of the peaceful use of nuclear power and will contribute to the KEDO Project in a wide range of areas.

6. In assuring the dismantlement of the existing nuclear program of North Korea and thus strengthening the international non-proliferation regime over the Korean Peninsula, KEDO plays an essential role of securing the peace and stability of the Peninsula. It is our strong hope that North Korea will move to nurture constructive relations with the IAEA and will come into full compliance with its own IAEA safeguards agreement. Such development would enable us to see further progress towards KEDO's crucial goal. Japan also recognizes that the implication of the issues KEDO addresses is not merely limited to the Korean Peninsula, but extends globally. This forms the basis for Japan's highly active contribution to KEDO both in terms of financial and personnel support. I am very proud of the GOJ's active role having been engaged so far. We also highly appreciate coordination and cooperation with our colleagues in the Executive Board, namely the ROK and the US. I would also like to commend that the European Union raised its contribution upon its accession agreement renewal in late 2001 with their recognition of the global importance of the KEDO's objectives. Furthermore, I would like to gratefully acknowledge the fact that our friends in the Asia region, including Australia, New Zealand and six ASEAN members, are making generous contributions to KEDO. I am hoping that this sort of global cooperation will grow, thereby making the progress of the KEDO Project more and more a truly global one.

7. Thank you very much for your attention, and best wishes for the continued success of the KEDO Project.

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